



# Arizona Department of Transportation

## Public Transportation Division

### MEMORANDUM

**To:** Tribal Transit Agencies

**Date:** 11 September, 2006

**From:** Jim Dickey, Director  
Public Transportation Division

**Subject:** Tribal Transit Program

SAFETEA-LU has now authorized a Tribal Transit Program and has authorized eligible tribes to be direct recipients of section 5311 funds. The funding level authorized for this new program is \$45 million from the Nonurbanized Area Formula Program for FY 2006 – FY 2009. In FY 2006, \$7.92 million is available for allocation to projects selected through the competitive application process. Funds set aside for Indian tribes in the Tribal Transit Program are not meant to replace or reduce funds that Indian tribes receive from States through FTA's Nonurbanized Area Formula Program.

- Eligibility Information

- Eligible direct recipients include federally-recognized Indian tribes or Alaska Native villages, groups, or communities as identified by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) in the U.S. Department of the Interior.
- Tribal Transit Program funds may be used for any purpose authorized under section 5311. This means that grants can be awarded to recipients located in rural and small urban areas with populations under 50,000 not identified as an urbanized area by the Bureau of the Census for public transportation capital projects, operating costs of equipment and facilities for use in public transportation, planning, and the acquisition of public transportation services, including service agreements with private providers of public transportation services. Service funded under this program must be designed to be accessible to members of the general public who have disabilities. Coordinated human service transportation that primarily serves elderly persons and persons with disabilities, but which is not restricted from carrying other members of the public, is considered available to the general public if it is marketed as public transportation.
- A regional transit district or any other local government cannot directly apply for grants on behalf of Indian tribes under the Tribal Transit Program. Although local governments are not eligible direct recipients under this new program, Indian tribes may enter into intergovernmental agreements with local governments for the purpose of assisting Indian tribes in grant-related administrative requirements, such as grant preparation, grant reporting, etc.

- Application Information

- The number and amount of awards will be determined by a competitive process. FTA will divide the applications into three categories for the purpose of reviewing and selecting projects to be funded:
  - Start ups – applications for funding of new transit service (approximately 25% of the funding is set aside for start up grants)
  - Existing transit services – applications for funding of enhancements or expansion of existing transit services
  - Planning – applications for funding of planning studies and operational planning (planning grants will be limited to \$25,000 per applicant and multiple year projects will be considered for funding subject to the availability of annual appropriations)
- Evaluation criteria for Start ups and existing transit services include:
  - Project planning and coordination
  - Demonstration of need
  - Benefits of project
  - Financial commitment and operating capacity
- Evaluation criteria for planning projects include:
  - Is the tribe committed to planning for transit
  - Is the scope of the proposed study for tribal transit
- Application content includes:
  - Applicant information
  - Proof of technical, legal, and financial capacity to implement proposed project
  - Project information to include budget and project description
  - Project timeline
- As part of their application for grant award, tribes that are selected for award will be required to sign the Certifications and Assurances for the fiscal year in which they apply for a grant. A comprehensive list and description for all of the statutory and regulatory terms and conditions that will apply to the Tribal Transit Program are set forth in FTA's Master Agreement for the Tribal Transit Program available at [http://www.fta.dot.gov/17861\\_18441\\_ENG\\_HTML.htm](http://www.fta.dot.gov/17861_18441_ENG_HTML.htm).
- FY 2006 Tribal Transit Program applications are due to FTA no later than 16 October 2006

- Matching Funds

- No cost sharing is required for this program; the Federal grant may fund up to 100 percent of eligible project costs